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Dear Permission to be Powerful Reader,

It's not politically correct to say you have low self-esteem.

People aren't as self-aware as you think.

And there are plenty of people in denial about it.

I was one of them.

For years, I would've told you I had confidence.

☞ I carried myself well.

☞ I could speak with authority.

☞ I wasn't afraid to go after what I wanted.

But deep down?

I didn't actually love myself.

Not really.

Loving yourself isn't about affirmations in the mirror.

It's not about telling yourself you're worthy while ignoring all the ways you treat yourself like you're not.

So, what does the evidence say?

Let's run a quick audit:

- ☞ Do you let people disrespect you?
- ☞ Do you abandon yourself to keep others happy?
- ☞ Do you settle for things you don't want because you don't believe you deserve better?
- ☞ Do you constantly feel drained because you overextend yourself for people who wouldn't do the same for you?

That's not self-love.

That's self-betrayal.

I had to learn the hard way that love isn't about words—it's about ACTION.

- ☞ You don't love yourself if you're constantly proving your worth to people who don't appreciate you.
- ☞ You don't love yourself if you let others dictate your value.
- ☞ You don't love yourself if you're afraid to walk away from what doesn't serve you.

That's not self-love. That's fear.

So, how do you actually love yourself?

You set boundaries. You protect your peace. You invest in yourself like you're your own most important relationship—because you are.

Loving yourself means your actions match your words.

☞ It means walking away from people who take you for granted.

☞ It means saying *no* without guilt.

☞ It means putting yourself first, not in a selfish way...

But because you understand that when you thrive, you bring your best self to the world.

Loving yourself means treating yourself like someone worth fighting for.

Because you are.

And if your life doesn't reflect that yet—now's the time to change it.

The Hidden Signs of Self-Abandonment

Sometimes, low self-worth doesn't look like insecurity. It looks like:

- Over-explaining yourself to people who don't even deserve an explanation.
- Tolerating lukewarm relationships that leave you feeling unseen.
- Working yourself to the bone to prove your value instead of *knowing* you're valuable.
- Being the go-to fixer for everyone else's problems but ignoring your own.

Self-love isn't about grand gestures. It's about a series of small, consistent choices that prove—to *you*—that you matter.

The Hardest Part About Self-Love?

It forces you to take responsibility.

If you've been allowing mistreatment, staying in cycles that harm you, or neglecting your own needs, self-love means owning up to it.

No more excuses. No more pretending. No more waiting for someone else to value you first.

It's not easy.

But it's worth it.

Because the moment you start acting like someone who loves themselves...

Your entire world shifts.

Your relationships improve. Your confidence rises. Your peace returns.

And best of all?

You stop settling for less than you deserve.

Because real self-love doesn't tolerate anything less than respect.

And neither should you.

What Happens When You Finally Love Yourself?

Everything changes.

- You stop chasing validation and start living with self-respect.
- You attract healthier relationships because you no longer entertain toxic ones.
- You recognize that your happiness isn't anyone else's responsibility—it's yours.
- You become unshakable, because your worth is no longer tied to external approval.

And here's the real kicker:

When you truly love yourself, you stop apologizing for being who you are.

- ☞ You stop making yourself small to make others comfortable.
- ☞ You stop explaining your decisions to people who wouldn't understand.
- ☞ You stop shrinking for anyone who doesn't celebrate your full, authentic self.

Because when you love yourself...

You don't need permission to take up space.

You *become* the person you were always meant to be.

And nothing is more powerful than that.

Until next time,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink. The signature reads "Anton Volney". The letters are fluid and connected, with long, sweeping strokes. The "A" is particularly large and prominent, and the "V" in "Volney" is also large and stylized. The signature is written on a white background.

Dancer, Writer, Buddhist



P.S.: To get the summary notes of this article, go [here](#).

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